4/3/74

Dear George,

If you want a measure of how much your letter ofthe 2d excites me, I have eight pages from Jimmy Ray and I haven't even read them to be certain I will be able to mail this when I leave for town to pick my wife up this afternoon.

I am all for all or any of your suggestions, however it works out of whatever you or the UAW people suggest or prefer. And please do whatever you can to get it started as soon as you can.

I do have two suggestions to make and if there is any reluctance or opposition, they are only suggestions.

Recently there has developed institutional interest in my work, all of it, not just on assassinations. If the funding can be arranged through some foundation, it will begin officially immediately. Informally it has already begun with a small local college that is being reborn, so to speak. Formerly it was a women's college. Now there are a few men. And both institutions are interested in oral histories.

Some of these young women have already begun specialized studies. They are bright and all I have met to date are fine human beings. (I expect two this afternoon.)

So, if the UAW people are interested and have no reluctance to have a few college women present, I would welcome that. I think giving students, particularly women, an insight into this new breed, would be good for both the union and the students. And I think letting the students in on a largely unrecorded part of the seamy side of recent history while they have an opportunity to be with and to evaluate the kind of men who have evolved could be valuable to them.

Your handwritten note asks,"Or should I wait for your book?" I plan none of this. Perhaps one of the students might be interested inx thesis that could make a book? If so, would it not serve all interests?

This leads me to one of the two restrictions I would like to make. The first is an obvious one, given the nature of the material: not that what can reflect unfairly on others be prohibited from any use, which on other subjects I was ask, but that there be real care and consideration before there is any use of this kind. The other is that I hold for my lifetime the right to the literary rights. This is not the same as saying I reserve all literary rights. It is, rather, that I would want some fair shhre were there to be commercial use. This is not only normal, but we have been broke and in debt for a decade. And I mean not use but only where they may be commercial use. I do believe there can be movie material in this.

So, if the others are willing, I look forward to what you suggest, but I would like it to be taped, not with the formality of what I understand oral histories to be, but more like a bull session, with wide participation. Not only is it likely that others will have substantial contributions and probably fascinating personal recollections, but I know for experiences of the past that when I have real dialogue and a receptive audience it draws me out. Not like a ham on camera but it triggers recall, reminds me of indicents that had not come to mind, things like that.

My own taping equipment is, of the operative, limited to a Sony TC 40.

If it is agreeable to the UAW people and any others (you? your kids?) I would then suggest that for busy men an evening might be better. For these students, any time up to about the middle of the first week of May, when they have to begin preparing for finals. If this is agreeable, I have in mind a small group, to be selected by the dean who would, I am confident, be interested herself.

Unfortunately, I'm too brokento use the phone. As of now I have an afternoon meeting in Washington 4/15. I still get up before the sun and could be at UAW headquarters the beginning of their day if these people would like to meet with me briefly and discuss what interests them, how to go about it, etc. It is possible my schedule will change but as of yesterday, it is this. It can be important to me because it is a Hollywood interest in an aspect of my work. Yesterday's mailgram concludes they are ready to reach an agreement.

I am five days from my 61st birthday. I am anxious to arrange for access to an enormous amount of work. I hope so much from something to come of the broad arrangements I am trying to make I can feel it while I taste it. And I have been part of very much over the years, and enormous part, in snatches, not recorded anywhere.

Aside from my own investigative reporting, which was not the need kind, leaks and little more, I palled and boozed with public figures. There are bits and pieces of history I perhaps alone have.

Right after I wrote you another bit of this came back, the Anderson column with a short piece on patents and Rohm and Haas (actually Haas). That was one of my more sensational anti-Nixon control exposures and the entire story involves a former President and a man prominent today, Hugh Scott. I wrote Whitten. You know the hangup on me. Jack Anderson apparently shares it, as I do not know what if any the response will be. However, while I was able to get most of my work published, one that I couldn't should interest the UMW people because it relates to a restrictive arrangement to in effect prevent the development of synthetic oil from coal (also synthetic rubber). Whether or not I still have those files in storage - and because I was working with both DJ and British intelligence either may not have returned them - I have a sharp enough recollection, including names, to get them started if they want to look into this.

The story was then so hot that even PM, which got wind of it, probably through DJ, first approached me and then chickened out.

And is this not an area where student power could be of interest to unions? Could there not be mutual interests?

So, your suggestion excites me, whether in limited or full use.

Please go ahead and do what you can as soon as you can. I agree in advance to whatever arrangements are made and to whatever restrictions anyone might want, but I would really want a tape very much and for it to be available for oral-history use.

And George, if I can get a foundation interested, I see not only fairly extensive and socially useful literary possibilities from a tremendous amount of work. I can see the work of students over the years, and centered around a readily-available archive, I can see potential usefulness to all the media.

I much appreciate any encouragement. Thanks for yours.

Sincerely,